

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

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R 091340Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY SANAA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3294

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USCINCEUR

S E C R E T SANAA 256

EXDIS

DEPT PASS: NAVEUR USAFE, USAREUR, USMTM DHAHRAN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, SA, JO, UK, YE, TC, QA

SUBJ: BRITISH MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO YAR

REF: DAO JIDDA IR NO 6 884 0006 74

KUWAIT PASS DOHA

1. BRITISH AMBASSADOR D. C. CARDEN CALLED ON AMBASSADOR FEBRUARY 9. SAYING THAT HE WISHED TO KEEP US INFORMED RE BRITISH MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO YAR IN SAME SPIRIT OF CANDOR WITH WHICH WE HAD KEPT HIM GENERALLY APPRISED OF AMERICAN THINKING, CARDEN CONVEYED SUBSTANCE OF INFO CONTAINED REFTEL, ADDING SOME DETAILS. RACAL COMMUNICATIONS CONTRACT HAS NOW BEEN SIGNED. VALUE OF INITIAL CONTRACT IS 2.9 MILLION POUNDS STERLING BUT EXPANSION IN LATTER PHASES HAS BEEN DISCUSSED. UNDER THIS PROGRAM, RACAL WILL IN EFFECT BECOME THE SUPPLIER AND ADVISER ON VIRTUALLY ALL YAR MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS. RACAL TRAINING TEAMS WILL BE STATIONED IN YEMEN AND YEMENI OFFICERS WILL ALSO TRAIN IN UK. RUSSIANS ARE

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THOUGHT TO HAVE TRIED DISRUPT SIGNATURE OF CONTRACT AT

LAST MINUTE BY OFFERING GRATIS COMMUNICATIONS PACKAGE OF THEIR OWN BUT EFFORT FAILED. BRITISH GRATEFUL FOR STEADY SUPPORT OF JORDANIAN OFFICER ADVISING YARG ON MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS WHO HAD TESTIFIED TO QUALITY OF RACAL AND ITS EQUIPMENT BUT AT SAME TIME HAD HELPED YEMENIS DRIVE A HARD BARGAIN.

2. IN ANSWER OUR QUESTION, CARDEN SAID UK HAD NOT PLAYED ANY ROLE IN ARRANGING FINANCING. YARG HAD HANDLED THIS ON ITS OWN. BULK OF FUNDING COMING FROM SAG, BUT QATAR ALSO CONTRIBUTING AND HAS EVIDENTLY OFFERED MORE HELP IN FUNDING MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO YAR IN FUTURE.

3. CARDEN ALSO INFORMED US OF TWO SKYVAN TRANSPORTS FINANCED BY ABU DHABI. ADG FINANCING PURCHASE COST OF AIRCRAFT AND TRAINING IN BELFAST BUT AGREEMENT ON OTHER RELATED COSTS NOT QUITE PINNED DOWN.

4. CARDEN SAID HIS PERSONAL PHILOSOPHY WAS THAT PIECEMEAL OR SECTORAL APPROACH TO RE-EQUIPMENT OF YEMEN ARMED FORCES, WITH A GIVEN FOREIGN COMMERCIAL SUPPLIER USING FUNDS AVAILABLE IN AREA AND GUARANTEEING PROPER TRAINING, MAKES SENSE FROM YEMEN'S INTEREST. IT ALSO MAKES SENSE FOR UK TO PURSUE THESE CONTRACTS IN VIEW ITS CRITICAL BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PROBLEM. FINALLY, IT HELPS STAVE OFF FURTHER DECLINE IN LOORALE OF YEMEN ARMED FORCES AND LEADERSHIP WHICH HAS RESULTED FROM TURNOFF OF RUSSIAN MILITARY AID AND FAILURE OF WEST TO DATE TO PROVIDE AN ALTERNATIVE.

4. COMMENT: FOREGOING ILLUSTRATES A POINT EMBASSY HAS TRIED TO MAKE SEVERAL TIMES IN DIFFERENT WAYS. MILITARY NEEDS OF YEMEN ARE GENUINE AND STRONGLY FELT. THERE IS PLENTY OF MONEY AVAILABLE IN AREA TO PURCHASE ARMS FOR YAR; SALESMANSHIP IS HIGHLY COMPETITIVE AND SELLERS ARE BACKED BY GOVERNMENTAL INFLUENCE. BRITISH CAME IN LATE BUT HAVE BEEN FAST OFF THE MARK, AS THIS TEL AND REFERENCE INDICATE. WE FEEL THERE IS GOOD REASON FOR US TO GET OFF THE DIME. HAD WE BY THIS TIME WORKED OUT WITH SAG A COMMON APPROACH TOWARD RESUPPLY OF
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YEMEN, SAG PURCHASES FOR YEMEN PROBABLY WOULD HAVE BEEN MADE MAINLY FROM AMERICAN SOURCES. THIS CAN STILL BE THE CASE BUT WE MUST MOVE FASTER, I.E. WE STILL OWE SAG A REPLY ON APPROACH TO YEMEN TRAINING AND RE-EQUIPMENT.

5. ON US ASPECT, PRESIDENT IRYANI PLANS MEET WITH SHAIKH ZAYID OF ABU DHABI AT ISLAMIC SUMMIT TO

REVIEW ALL OF YARG'S PROJECTS FOR WHICH IT SEEKS ABU
DHABI FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, INCLUDING US ARMS PACKAGE,
EXPANDED JORDANIAN MILITARY ASSISTANCE, INTER-CONTINENTAL
HOTELS FEASIBILITY STUDY, POSSIBLE SUBSIDIZATION OF
PAN AM MANAGEMENT CONTRACT, ETC. YEMENI AMBASSADOR
TO UAE QABATI IS CURRENTLY IN SANAA FOR CONSULTATION.
IN PREPARATION FOR YARG'S DISCUSSIONS WITH SHAIKH
ZAYID, EMBASSY HAS BEEN ASKED PREPARE FOR PRESIDENT
IRYANI A CHRONOLOGY SHOWING HISTORY OF USG-YARG-ADG
ACTIONS RE US ARMS SALE FROM PRIMIN'S FIRST REQUEST
TO PRESENT.
CRAWFORD

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDEES.

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